

Congressman Fernand St. Germain, a Democrat from Rhode Island. She coordinated the work of the Congressman between his personal office and the Committee. Mrs. Hitz retired from Congressional service in 1983 from her position with Congressman St. Germain after more than 20 years of federal civil service.

In 1987, Mrs. Hitz moved from Virginia to Jackson, Tennessee to be near her son, John Hitz. In 1998 she relocated to Holts Summit, Missouri to be near her other son, Charles Hitz, and to her hometown of Jefferson City, Missouri when she lived until her death.

It is always an honor and a privilege to recognize folks who have given a large portion of their lives to government service. It is a noble profession and I am proud to recognize the service of Mrs. Helen C. Hitz.

RECOGNIZING THE HISPANIC ENGINEER NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS CORPORATION

HON. RUBÉN HINOJOSA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2002

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work that the Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Awards Corporation (HENAAC) is doing to enlighten the Hispanic community and nation about the achievements of Hispanics in science and technology in order to motivate Hispanic students to pursue careers in science and technology.

American students lag behind their counterparts in other developed countries like Japan in the areas of science and math. If America is to hold its technological advantage in an ever complex world, we must close this gap and improve our children's achievements in math and science.

In October, HENAAC will hold its annual conference to honor outstanding Hispanics in nine categories. In addition to the conference, HENAAC, in conjunction with the University of Texas-Pan American in my Congressional district, will also sponsor four special events as part of the International Science and Technology Week. The Hispanic Science and Technology EXPO Day at UT Pan American will bring students, parents, educators and the community together to learn about the importance of science and technology and give students information on career opportunities in engineering, science and math. Thousands of pre-college students will be able to participate in the hands-on interactive workshops, presentations and expositions. Hispanic Science and Technology Educator Day will recognize teachers throughout South Texas and give them opportunities to improve their skills.

In addition to International Science and Technology Week, HENAAC also sponsors student scholarships and a Hall of Fame traveling exhibit.

On February 19, 2002, the University of Texas-Pan American will have a kick-off to encourage students, parents and teachers to participate in the upcoming events. I want to commend HENAAC and the University of Texas-Pan American for their commitment to educating the next generation of Hispanic scientists, mathematicians and engineers.

HONORING BOB SECRIST OF BOISE, IDAHO, ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS REGIONAL OFFICE

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2002

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bob Secrist, a man who has served Idaho veterans for more than 30 years, on his retirement from the Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office.

As a Vietnam veteran himself, Bob has shown compassion and dedication to veterans of all ages and in all areas of Idaho.

Bob grew up in the farming community of St. Anthony, Idaho where he learned the value of hard work, a firm handshake and an honest heart. He stayed close to home, attending Ricks College and graduating in 1964. He served his church on a two-year mission to the Great Lakes area. When he returned, he joined the Idaho National Guard. While in the Guard, he was called to Vietnam. He was a truck driver, delivering truckloads of gasoline and diesel fuel throughout Vietnam's Central Highlands. His highly explosive convoys negotiated mined roadways, blown up bridges, and sporadic enemy assaults. He returned in August 1969, married his sweetheart Judy in 1970, and graduated from Idaho State University in 1971 with a degree in business.

After graduating, the family moved to Boise, and Bob began his distinguished career at the VA Regional Office. He started out as Claims Adjudicator working stacks of paper to help those who'd been disabled in the line of duty. For many, Bob put a human face to veterans' issues. His outreach on veterans' issues is legendary. If you had a question about veterans' benefits, Bob knew the answer.

In 1974, he was promoted to be the Education Liaison Representative working with Idaho schools under the GI Bill education program. According to his colleagues, Bob was able to streamline the schools' procedures and improve services to veterans enrolled in school. He utilized his claims processing background to work weekends helping adjudicators to write education awards and clearing up processing delays.

Because of his dedication and community involvement, he was named the Chief of the Regional Office's Veterans Services Division in 1990. In this position, he was in charge of state outreach to all veterans and beneficiaries around the state.

Bob always felt compassion for veterans. He never lost sight of who he was working for—not the government—not the VA—but the veterans who had served this country. He made sure the VA Regional Office wasn't an Ivory Tower looking down on the veterans they served. In the face of budget cuts, he was determined to make the Regional Office "veteran friendly." He began a program of partnerships with the Veterans Service Organizations, the VFW, DAV, American Legion, the Wake Island Survivors, the Idaho Department of Veterans Services, and many others.

After the Regional Office was consolidated in the late 1990s, Bob was appointed as the Regional Office Public Information Officer. In that position, he served as a congressional li-

aison, always ensuring that my staff and I was informed about veterans issues.

Bob, for 33 years you've been a shining star in the veterans' community, showing those around you that veterans come before bureaucracy and that good ideas don't need to be buried under the burden of government. I commend you. I congratulate you and on behalf of the thousands of veterans you've served, and I thank you.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JERRY SORENSON

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2002

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with a solemn heart that I take this opportunity to pay respect to the passing of a friend, Gerald "Jerry" Edwin Sorensen, who recently passed away at the age of 55. Jerry was a pillar of the Glenwood Springs community and as his family mourns his loss, I think it is appropriate to remember Jerry and pay tribute to him for his contributions to his community.

Jerry will always be forever known as a true sports fan, a man who lived and thrived for sporting events. He is remembered as a superb athlete during his high school years, participating on and playing for the Roaring Fork High School football and baseball teams located in Carbondale, Colorado. His passion for sports continued throughout his life branching into hunting, fishing, 4-wheeling, bowling and watching his favorite football team, the Denver Broncos. Although known for his athleticism and hard work, Jerry's true love was working and interacting with people, particularly his two sons and grandsons. He will be remembered as a devoted husband, father, and friend. He affected the lives of so many of Glenwood's residents with his kindness and his generosity and he will be greatly missed.

Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sadness that we note the passing of Gerald "Jerry" Edwin. He was known for his kind heart and the gentle demeanor he displayed throughout his life and his good deeds and dedication to his fellow man certainly deserve the recognition of this body of Congress. I, along with a grateful community and loving family will miss Jerry dearly.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF LLOYD KIVA NEW

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2002

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a recently lost New Mexican who was a devoted Native American educator, artist, and entrepreneur. Lloyd Kiva New had intuition and visionary skills that made him a successful business man; however, more importantly, his humble heart and ambition drove him to aide young Native American students to strive for excellence at the Institute of American Indian Arts.

The Native American community has lost a prolific humanitarian, who devoted much of his